

Representative Claudia Tenney (NY-22)

Testimony to Committee on Appropriations- Subcommittee on Military, Construction, VA and
Related Agencies

April 17, 2018

I first want to thank Chairman Dent, Ranking Member Wasserman Schultz and the members of the Appropriations Committee for providing me the opportunity to testify today in support of the request submitted to Congress by the Secretary of the Air Force for a perimeter fence around the Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate, also known as Rome Lab.

Rome Lab is a premier research and development facility, committed to our nation's safety and cyber security. As a leader in communications and information technologies, Rome Lab ensures that our defense capabilities remain on the cutting edge. In a world where defense is increasingly technological in nature, Rome Lab is critical to the mission success of our warfighters.

At the present time, Rome Lab lacks a perimeter fence to secure the facility and meet existing force protection requirements, as outlined by the Department of Defense. The highly sensitive nature of Rome Lab's research and development projects place the site at a heightened risk. The critical work conducted at Rome Lab necessitates appropriate security safeguards, including a secure system of perimeter fencing.

Without this important precaution, the facility's sensitive information is vulnerable. A security fence around Rome's perimeter will also increase the safety of the Lab's more than 3,000 personnel. Additionally, the fencing will reduce the facility's susceptibility to terrorist type activities.

Joint Staff Integrated Vulnerability Assessments or JSVA Teams identified security vulnerability risks at Rome Lab in 2008 and then again in 2014. Indeed, in the last 10 years, over 240 individuals were detained, interviewed and released by security at Rome Lab, due to the lack

of perimeter security. Mr. Speaker, it is ten years since the first JSVA identification that I mentioned, this is far too long a time to allow this site remain unsecured.

As the mother of an active duty marine and representative to over fifty thousand veterans, I sincerely appreciate the important work that this subcommittee does for our military and our nation's veterans. I urge the subcommittee to provide strong consideration of the request for a perimeter fence, as submitted to Congress by the Secretary of the Air Force, and to prioritize the safety of the men and women who sacrifice so much to defend our nation as well as the vulnerability of sensitive military research.